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challenge



JOIN THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS PROTEST BUSH BUT

**DEMOCRATS ARE
NO LESSER EVIL**

On August 29, about 500,000 people marched in New York against Bush and his wars. Spirited demonstrators took on the NYPD in clashes throughout the Republican convention. They represented millions who reject Bush's wasting of human lives for oil and his pandering to greedy corporations. While the protests are encouraging, the rulers are hoping to direct these protests into the voting booths for the equally deadly Democrat Kerry. Bush and Kerry both serve the capitalist class that requires expanding imperialist wars and tightening control over the workers. They appeal to different voting bases and have some serious tactical differences over how to maintain U.S. world domination. But their essence is the same.

Democrats and Republicans support U.S. imperialism's strategic objectives, including an all-powerful U.S. military and control of the Middle East. In July 2003, the Senate voted 95-0 to support President Bush's \$368 billion military appropriation. In July 2004 they voted 96-0 for a \$425 billion military appropriation. Like the resolution authorizing the U.S. attack on Afghanistan, not one Democratic Senator stood in opposition.

Democrats and Republicans share U.S. military policy in the Middle East, including annually voting to award Israel \$3 billion to oppress Palestinian workers, threaten surrounding countries, and maintain an enormous arsenal of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons to act as U.S. imperialism's hired gun protecting the oil-rich region's western flank.

The Democrats supported the Iraq war from build-up to actual attack. Those who conditioned their support on multilateral approval through the United Nations dropped their reservations like a hot potato once the war began. Most Democrats unconditionally supported the war, and as with Vietnam, began to ask questions only when the mission began to falter. Now they want to capitalize on mass opposition to the war to win the election.

Imperialist war is not result of the bad policies of diabolical politicians that we can vote out of office. It is the nature of the capitalist beast. Wars for oil and other resources, for access to markets and cheap labor, and for

depriving other capitalists of these things are inevitable as long as capitalism exists. Elections and mass reform movements cannot end imperialism since they just provide a band-aid solution to a deadly cancer.

Only a mass communist movement can organize workers, soldiers and students to wipe out the imperialist warmakers and replace their dictatorship with the revolutionary dictatorship of the working class, abolishing their racist profit system. The bosses won't give up their profits peacefully. That is why the most important thing we can do is to build a mass international PLP as a way to wage the long and difficult struggle to put an end to the hell of capitalism.

Armed with communist politics, we can turn the horrors of the capitalists' wars against them. The torture and murder of prisoners at Abu Ghraib disgusted millions. On the job, barracks and schools, in the unions and mass organizations, we could have responded with more demonstrations, forums, and literature. We have the opportunity to transform widespread outrage at these atrocities into a mass movement against the capitalist dictatorship that commits them, at home and around the world.

The enemy isn't far to seek. On the job, we can attack war profiteering corporations and union bosses who try to sell us out to the imperialist Democrats. The schools and universities are crawling with military recruiters and ROTC programs. We can expose the universities' role in military research and in shaping the racist, fascist ideology that leads U.S. imperialism. In the community, we can target politicians who dismantle social programs to fund the war effort. But we can never think that an end to imperialist war will come before the working class, led by a mass international PLP, seizes power with communist revolution. ☸

**See Page 2 for Democrat
War and Domestic Crimes**

PLP'S RED POLITICS EXPOSES 'ANYONE BUT BUSH' ILLUSION

NEW YORK CITY, Sept. 2—Hundreds of thousands turned out to protest against the Republican Convention in spite of the police state conditions imposed by billionaire Mayor Bloomberg and his NYPD storm troopers. PLP was there to raise our revolutionary line. While challenging Bush and all he stands for is important, the most crucial thing we could do was to criticize the equally-evil Democrats and call on our fellow demonstrators to fight for communism. No politician can solve the problems facing workers.

We began by holding a protest at a neighborhood recruiting center. We called out all politicians as servants to the ruling-class bent on imperialist domination. We especially attacked the "lesser-evil" Kerry for calling for mandatory national service from High School students and his role in preparing our class brothers and sisters to fight in more imperialist wars. We explained to many workers, as well as people who just registered to go into the military, how an "economic draft" is already being conducted. The workers in the neighborhood accepted us warmly, and the recruiters had shock on their faces as we chanted, "Soldiers, Turn Your Guns Around - Shoot the Profit System Down!"

Our next stop was the massive anti-Bush march that brought out over 500,000 people despite the bosses' media attempts to dis-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Racist Ideology A Bosses’ Crucial Weapon To Hold State Power

The first article in this series discussed the state apparatus as the tool that allows the capitalists to exercise their dictatorship over the working class, regardless of the political party in power. This article will deal with the state apparatus and its relationship to capitalist ideology.

Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong wrote, “Political power flows from the barrel of a gun.” He was referring to the relationship between political authority and violence in class society. But the bosses cannot rule through violence alone. They also need a system of ideas and beliefs to support their oppressive system. The exercise of naked force is a last resort, and they use it ruthlessly when they need it. But they prefer to govern through the force of persuasion, by convincing workers and others that the profit system represents the best of all possible worlds and that revolution is impossible.

The bosses’ ideology is tightly bonded to their state apparatus. The state extends far beyond the official organs of government, like the presidency, the Congress, the military, the courts, the cops, etc. It also includes major foundations, universities, media chains, etc., all linked to the rulers’ various factions. The processes involved are far too numerous and complex for us to describe in one article. They are easier to understand if we examine specific examples. Here we will offer one related to racism.

Racism is the rulers’ bread and butter. It ensures the super-profits their economic system demands. But they also need a body of ideas and beliefs to justify these super-profits. Over the last several decades, the major universities, foundations, think tanks, and the government have all collaborated to transform racist ideology into

policy. Here are a few examples:

- In 1969, Harvard’s Review of Education published an article by Arthur Jensen, a professor of educational psychology. Relying on long discredited “evidence,” he argued that the federal government should stop funding educational programs in school districts with large numbers of black children, because black people in general had fewer “intelligence genes” than whites, and no amount of social engineering could alter the supposedly biological nature of intelligence. Anyone could see that this racist filth was no different from Nazi eugenics. Nonetheless, every establishment publication, includ-

Richard Herrnstein, who chaired the Harvard Psychology Department, weighed in with a series of articles and books claiming that “socioeconomic status” was genetically determined. These lies helped Nixon’s successors, both Democrat and Republican, slash social services and wages. Before his death, Herrnstein teamed up with still another Harvard storm trooper, Charles Murray, to publish The Bell Curve, which launched another salvo of racist genetic venom.

- From 1975 until today, a Harvard entomologist (i.e. ant specialist) named E.O. Wilson has made a fortune with his theory of “Sociobiology.” He says that all of soci-

played workers on welfare. They were forced to accept their welfare checks for jobs that once paid union wages and benefits. This served to grind down even further the wages, benefits, and working conditions of the entire working class. Bush has just stepped up those attacks.

We can draw several important conclusions about the nature of the rulers’ state apparatus and the ideology that supports its dictatorship over workers:

Regardless of the party in the White House, the bosses’ social and economic policies are racist to the core.

An onslaught of racist theorizing paves the way for racist policies.

The “theorists” are often linked to Harvard or other elite universities, and usually begins in the comfort of a research lab, seminar room, or the halls of a think-tank like the Brookings Institution.

The big guns of the capitalist media arsenal popularize racist theories by blasting them into newspapers and magazines and over the airwaves.

Understanding the class nature of the state requires that we also understand the class nature of all the major institutions in society and the complex relationship between them and the government.

Communists must expose this relationship and the racist, anti-working class ideas and policies the bosses need to maintain political power and maximum profits. PLP’s goal is to lead hundreds of millions of workers to smash the boss’s state and replace it with the revolutionary, communist dictatorship of the working class. Clarifying the class nature of the state can become an unbeatable weapon once it has been grasped by the working class.

Next: The bosses’ state, ideology, foreign policy, and the case of Samuel P. Huntington.

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ing the New York Times, trumpeted Jensen’s “research” as though it were a groundbreaking discovery. Republican President Nixon used it to justify drastic education budget cuts, which helped fund U.S. imperialism’s raging war of genocide in Vietnam.

- Another Harvard professor, Daniel P. Moynihan, who later became the liberal Democratic Senator from NY, commented that the “winds of Jensen [were] gusting with gale force” in Washington. Already established as a prominent racist theorist, he argued that the problems of the poorest black workers were not due to racist oppression, but to the “matriarchal” structure of the black family. Moynihan supported Nixon’s budget cuts, including a wage freeze in the early 1970s.

- Jensen inspired a host of imitators.

ety and all human behavior, from financial success to wars of conquest, is in the genes. When Sociobiology was first published, Wilson received vast media coverage, including cover stories in all the big weeklies, TV appearances, favorable New York Times reviews and was awarded a Pulitzer Prize.

The practical consequences of the policies that flowed from Jensen-Herrnstein-Murray-Wilson & Co., is racist misery for tens of millions of workers. The most tangible are the ongoing effects of social programs wiped out by the liberal Democrat Clinton. In one stroke, Clinton erased welfare, a process begun by Reagan, and replaced it with a racist scheme of slave-labor scabbing known as “Workfare.” Workfare replaced masses of laid-off, unionized municipal workers with unem-

DEMOCRATS’ WAR CRIMES

Wilson led the U.S. into World War I, making it a full-fledged imperialist power.

Roosevelt and Truman directed the unnecessary murders of hundreds of thousands of civilians in Tokyo, Dresden, Frankfurt, Hiroshima, and Nagasaki during World War II.

In the Cold War, Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter armed and funded pro-U.S. dictators and insurgencies around the world.

Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson wasted millions of workers’ lives trying to defend U.S. imperialism in Korea and Vietnam.

Kennedy invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs.

Johnson invaded the Dominican Republic.

Carter, who today goes around “overseeing democratic elections,” praised Somoza, the Nicaraguan dictator, for

his “progress in human rights,” just a year or so before he was forced to flee by a mass insurrection. It was also Carter, preaching his “Blood for Oil Profits” Doctrine, who began the U.S. military build-up in the Middle East.

Clinton dropped more bombs on Yugoslavia than his predecessors did on Vietnam.

Clinton enforced U.S. sanctions and “no-fly” zones, starving, bombing and killing over 500,000 Iraqis.

DEMOCRATS’ DOMESTIC CRIMES

Wilson used the Sedition Acts during WWI and imprisoned thousands for opposing the war and the draft.

After the war, Wilson launched the notorious Palmer Raids jailing and deporting thousands of leftist immigrant workers.

Wilson’s racist Immigration Act of 1917 kept out Asians.

Roosevelt herded Japanese-Americans into concen-

tration camps.

Truman approved the anti-Communist legislation and purges of the McCarthy era.

Johnson diverted troops of the 82nd Airborne from going to Vietnam to brutally put down rebelling workers in Detroit in 1967.

In Operation Cointelpro, Johnson unleashed the FBI on anti-Vietnam War activists.

Clinton signed “anti-terrorist” legislation that sharply curtails workers’ civil liberties.

Under Clinton, the prison population doubled to over 2 million, the highest in the world, especially among black workers.

Gary Hart helped create the imperialist, fascist manifesto known as the Hart-Rudman reports.

Virtually all Democrats in Congress voted for the Patriot Act and the Department of Homeland Security.

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

☐PLP fights to smash capitalism—wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim “communism is dead,” capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. The Soviet Union and China returned to capitalism because socialism maintained too many aspects of the profit system, like wages and divisions of labor.

☐Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism. This fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

☐Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profit. Everyone will share society’s benefits and burdens.

☐Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

☐Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

☐Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

☐Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers.

JOIN US!



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IT'S NOT BUSH, IT'S CAPITALISM!

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

courage people from attending. Our multi-racial contingent found it discouraging at times to fight for our line "Kerry/Bush - No Solution! Fight for Communist Revolution!" At first many were upset with us for denouncing elections, but when we explained our point of view, they were open and took CHALLENGE.

Today and during the other protest we distributed over 6,400 Challenges, 14,000 leaflets and countless buttons.



The overall political theme of the march was "Anybody But Bush," but as marchers passed by the PLP banner, we offered them a communist solution.

We did a good job of getting our line out to workers and students, but we should not fail to recognize our weaknesses and limits. In general, we need to give better leadership and involve more people in the Party activities. We need to grow! The rotten propaganda of the liberals and opportunist left is widespread. We must redouble our efforts to bring to the masses the antidote of communist

politics.. After a very successful project at the Democratic Convention in Boston in July, it was impossible to recreate the same energy and numbers for this project. We fought hard to remain objective and carry out the necessary work of our Party. As capitalism slips into crisis we must inten-



sify our political work and step up our efforts. Every party member and reader of the paper should consider what he or she could contribute to help the party grow.

What PLP did at the RNC had an undeniably positive effect. We pushed revolutionary politics forward and challenged people to think differently. Our actions helped to build class-consciousness and strengthen our organi-

zation. Pushing workers, students and soldiers to think about the long-term and how the working-class can get rid of capitalism is one of the most useful things to do with our lives. We need to ensure the Party grows as we and our children face fascism and imperialist wars. Fight for communism! Power to the workers!✪

'EXXON-MOBIL, TEXACO-WE WON'T FIGHT FOR YOU NO MORE!'

New York City, Sept. 2 — August 31 was a busy day. Scores of different groups staged protests from Wall St. to 50th St. in Manhattan, marching towards Madison Square Garden and the RNC. PLP members were well represented in the protest organized by a social justice coalition and members from other groups we're in. The coalition planned the protest in early summer, to focus on the issues of imperialism and oil wars, fascist repression under the Patriot Act and Homeland Security, and the need for the working class to unite and fight back against the war budget.



Sandwiched in by cops, we started our picket line in front of the Exxon building which houses a Chase-Manhattan bank branch on the ground floor. As we chanted, "Exxon-Mobil, Texaco-we won't fight for you no more," passersby took anti-imperialist leaflets, some nodding their approval. Several young people and others joined the line.

Claiming there was a "threat" to the building, the cops arrested three youth. One was simply an observer. As young legal observers got two released and info on the third, a man from an anti-police brutality group chanted, "Stop police brutality." Others added, "Black Latin, Asian, white, to defeat fascism we must unite." The cops arrested over 1100 protestors that day, profiling youth.

As we started to march toward Madison Square Garden many young people joined in, more than doubling our numbers. We chanted, "Jobs-Yes, Occupations-No, Imperialist Oil Wars Have Got To Go," and "US Troops Out of Iraq, End the War Now," as many people stopped to watch, take pictures and show support. We ended our march at 34th St. to avoid being caught in the cops' orange nets.

In building for this protest a number of PLP members successfully raised our ideas in several organizations and got endorsements for the action. This will help sharpen the ideological struggle inside these groups during this election period and encourage our friends to read Challenge, join PLP study groups and the Party.✪

AFL-CIO Can't Censor Rank & File Sign:

'War Budget Leaves Every Worker Behind'

NEW YORK CITY, Sept. 1—Contrary to Sunday's mammoth march against Bush and the Republican National Convention, today's union rally was very integrated and mainly working class. Some 10,000 workers and others rallied near Madison Square Garden, while Dick Cheney was about to speak. The rally followed a symbolic unemployment line of thousands, stretching 40 blocks from Wall Street to Madison Square Garden with signs reading, "The next pink slip might be yours." The city's Central Labor Council organized these two activities in place of the traditional Labor Day Parade.

The main speakers were a rogue's gallery of NYC union leaders; Dennis Rivera, head of 1199/SEIU, Lillian Roberts, chief of the city's AFSCME union, Roger Toussaint, head of TWU Local 100, and Randi Weingarten, of the teachers' union. All these "labor leaders" are loyal to capitalism and have sold out their membership in negotiations with the city bosses.

They talk about "regime change," but they mean electing Kerry and the Democrats. Never mind that it was Clinton-Gore that signed NAFTA, brought China into the WTO, failed to make good on striker replacement legislation, and launched racist attacks on welfare and other social services, all things the union leaders blame on the Republicans!

Jorge Rondón, an immigrant janitor said, "[The Republicans] are always talking about the cops and firefighters, but we are the true heroes. We cleaned from the beginning the asbestos in Ground Zero. We are the forgotten heroes." Many of these cleaning workers have suffered from respiratory diseases without getting any help at all.

The AFL-CIO leadership tried to exert tight control over the slogans printed on signs carried by union members. They wanted a scripted



"mainstream" message that they could use in the so-called battle ground states in the Kerry campaign. But a struggle took place inside the planning meetings for this demonstration, which resulted in signs that read, "A war budget leaves every worker behind" finding their way into one union contingent. Many workers said they supported this anti-Iraqi war sentiment!

The only real answers workers and other anti-Bush demonstrators got during the many days of protest was the one brought by PLP. With many thousands of leaflets, buttons that read, "It's not just Bush, It's Capitalism," and some 6400 CHALLENGES distributed all week, our communist message was clear: illusions on the Democrats are deadly for workers and youth, and union hacks are in the bosses' pockets. The only way out is to organize a mass communist-led anti-racist revolutionary movement to get rid of capitalism once and for all.✪

Turning Base For Red Prez Into Mass Base For Communism

WASHINGTON, DC September 1 – The election of PLP member Mike Golash as president of ATU Local 689 is a very significant political development, full of dangers and opportunities. Two thousand members of this mainly black local of 9,000 voted for a known communist, in the shadow of the White House, in the midst of the war in Iraq and growing Homeland Security fascism.

The union’s Committee on Political Education (COPE) is organizing a conference on October 16 at the union hall to begin a discussion of the issues that the union must deal with in the near future. All of these issues (racism, cost of health insurance, women’s rights, the war in Iraq and homeland security, and cuts in spending on mass transit) are related to the ongoing crisis of modern imperialism. We hope many workers will participate, and as a result, win many new CHALLENGE readers and distributors.

Through the two election campaigns, a Party study group was pulled together and dozens of workers participated in Mike’s campaign. During the campaign, CHAL-

LENGE sales, which are way too low, increased a little. After Mike lost the first election and went back to driving a bus, they increased a little more. But since winning office, CHALLENGE sales have slumped again. Mike has been trying to get the local union up and running, and too few workers are distributing CHALLENGE.

A contract fight is brewing, and coming off the election, workers’ expectations are high. There may be a red president, but it’s still the same union. In order to battle the bosses, we need to change the political outlook of the workers and the organizational strength of the union. We’re waging a struggle to build unity and equality in our ranks, and either suffer, or move forward together. We will not accept a contract that divides the workers or plays one group against the other. The right arguments and knowledge aren’t enough. Workers’ commitment to the class struggle is what makes the difference, and at its core must be a stronger, bigger base for PLP.

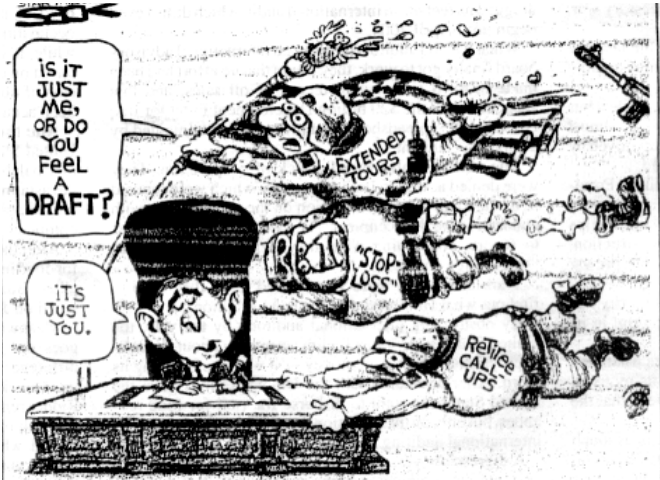
A young driver reports that the mood in his garage is changing. More workers are

standing up and looking out for each other, even though many are afraid. This is a long-term struggle and things are not going to change overnight. We need to involve many more workers in giving political leadership, or many more will get cynical.

At a recent Party meeting, one veteran Metro worker said that the election fell in our lap because the old president went crazy. “If anyone else had run against Mike, they would have won...The workers voted for Mike, not PLP. And if they stop Mike, this enterprise is over.”

Maybe. But luck is when opportunity meets preparation. If you haven’t done the work, and proven yourself to the workers, having won their trust and confidence and you having confidence in them, then you can’t

take advantage of opportunities when they arise. Over 28 years, Mike has done the work, built the ties, engaged in the struggle and built a base for PLP. As another worker at the meeting said, “It’s more than political. We’ve been friends for over 25 years.” Our challenge now is to turn a mass base for a communist into a mass base for communism. ☸



UAW Refuses to Strike While CAT Chews Up Workers’ Contract

PEORIA, IL August 15 — For the second time in four months, 9,200 Caterpillar workers rejected the “last, best and final offer” of the world’s largest manufacturer of heavy equipment. Seven UAW locals in four states defeated the contract proposal. Workers are currently working without a contract, and UAW bargaining chairman Bill Scott said that a strike is not even under consideration, despite overwhelming strike votes by the workers. The latest proposal would give workers a signing bonus, cost-of-living increases and lump-sum payments instead of a raise. It would also create a two-tier wage system for new-hires that would lower top wages by \$7 an hour and replace the pension with a 401(k) plan. The company also wants current and future workers and 20,000 retirees to begin paying some of their health costs.

If an agreement isn’t reached by September, retirees will have premiums taken out of their monthly pension checks, ranging from \$130 for an individual not on Medicare to a high of \$280 for a retiree and spouse both on Medicare. The premiums will increase on Jan. 1, 2005. The UAW is trying to hold on to what little remains of a contract that was the result of a 6 ½-year dispute that ended in

defeat in 1998. The union says the company can afford a better deal based on soaring profits over the last several years. CAT says this contract is not about affordability, but competitiveness in the global market. CAT saw record profits and sales in the last quarter, and expect a 25 percent boost in sales and revenues for 2004, along with an “80 percent increase in profits” over last year. (CHICAGO TRIBUNE, 8/17)

CAT is fighting to free itself from 40 years of union contracts. In 1998, the company was able for the first time to hire temporary workers at lower wages. It also swept aside the tradition of annual pay hikes. What’s more, CAT is confident that they have taken the strike weapon out of the UAW’s hands. During the strike in 1994-95, CAT ran its factories with scabs, shipped work to its overseas facilities, and made then-record profits.

A decade later, the union is much weaker than it was then. Since 1998, the union has lost about 3,000 members at CAT, and is one-fifth of what they were 25 years ago. Also, about 70 percent of the aging workforce will be eligible to retire within the next six years.

UAW leaders, blinded by nationalism and shackled by obedience to the bosses’ laws, are no match for CAT’s attacks. In this period of sharpened inter-imperialist rivalry they will sacrifice current and future workers’ living standards to keep the bosses “competitive in the global market” and pay for their imperialist wars. Building a mass international PLP among industrial workers is the only way to eventually end these fascist attacks with communist revolution. ☸



Detriot City Workers Wildcat vs. Democrats Racist Cuts, Layoffs

DETROIT, MI — Democratic mayor Kwame Kilpatrick laid off nearly 400 city workers this summer. Kilpatrick, the bankers and auto bosses are targeting city services to close a \$333 million budget deficit.

These layoffs follow the layoffs of 3,200 custodians, engineers, bus drivers, repairmen and other school workers, including 900 teachers from the Detroit public schools. Ninety percent of Detroit’s 151,000 public school students are black, and more than 7 out of 10 come from families living below the official poverty level.

The cuts include shutting at least three schools, in addition to the 16 closed or consolidated last year, and renegotiating the contract with the Detroit Federation of Teachers to reduce or eliminate 3-4 percent annual raises. The budget for supplies and purchased services was cut by more than one-third, \$50 million, and funding for playground improvements were slashed from \$1 million to \$250,000.

Bush’s No Child Left Behind Act removes federal funds if districts fail to achieve specific academic goals. These budget cuts, layoffs and school closings ensure future failures and even more budget cuts.

“The conditions are already unbearable,” said a school bus driver. “Buildings are falling apart, there is no toilet paper or soap in the bathrooms, the classrooms are overcrowded and the teachers are spending money out of their own pockets...With the casinos downtown making millions and CEOs raking it in, how can they say there is no money for schools?”

Last June, a rank-and-file group called the DPS United Workers Coalition Committee organized wildcat strikes against the job cuts. Workers’ anger erupted when pink slips went out on June 11, eliminating whole departments and taking the jobs and benefits of older workers near retirement. On June 17, School Board President Bill Brooks cancelled the regularly sched-

uled meeting when more than 700 people showed up to protest the layoffs. He said there was not enough security to protect the board from the angry workers.

The wildcats were aimed at Democratic Party politicians, who control the city on behalf of the auto bosses and bankers, and the pro-capitalist union leaders who have no plan to fight back.

At the east side bus terminal, Teamsters leaders worked with the police to open the gates and told the drivers if they didn’t work they would lose their jobs. They even tried to get bus drivers to crawl through a hole in the fence. None of the drivers crossed the line. Citywide, only three out of 300 buses left the terminals.

On the second day, despite seven arrests on the east side, drivers refused to drive their buses out of the yard. On the west side, all the workers were forced to drive or lose their jobs. The drivers took their buses to the schools and parked them, rather than picking up students for summer school. Two other picketers were arrested at the west side depot.

Workers expressed outrage that city money is used for casinos and sports stadiums but it is not available for education. “They are spending \$130 billion on the war in Iraq. You mean to tell me that they don’t have money for schools here at home?” said one worker. Another said, “I call it union-busting...Two years ago they laid off 210 people, now they want to lay off 3,200. Where does it stop?”

Under capitalism it never stops. The struggle between bosses and workers is constant and never ending. And in this period, imperialist wars and Homeland Security fascism are being financed by racist attacks on the international working class. Building a mass PLP for communist revolution is the only way off of this treadmill. And judging by Detroit’s school workers, the opportunities are growing. ☸

Job Creation: A Capitalist Mirage

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate fell slightly from 5.5 percent in July to 5.4 percent. But the unemployment rate for black workers is almost twice the national average, 10.4 percent, and for teenagers is 17 percent. The drop in the official unemployment rate comes mainly from 152,000 people leaving the workforce. While 144,000 new jobs were reported in August, 8 million people are still officially unemployed, and for the 23rd month in a row, more than 20 percent have been unemployed for more than six months. The average duration of unemployment increased to 19 weeks.

In addition to the 8 million “officially” unemployed, another 1.6 million are considered “marginally attached to the labor force,” meaning they looked for work some time in the past 12 months, but not in the four weeks preceding the survey. Those who have given up looking are not counted at all.

Manufacturing jobs increased by 22,000, but “this increase mostly reflected auto workers returning to work from the larger-than-usual annual retooling shutdowns in July.” Retail trade lost 11,000 jobs in August, and 25,000 over the past two months. Information service employment declined by 10,000 in August and 550,000 since March 2001.

“The relationship between economic growth and job creation has changed in important ways,” reports the

New York Times (8/9). “The economy is spinning its wheels,” says Richard Yamarone, chief economist at Argus Research in New York. “Corporate America is reluctant to hire anyone above the bare minimum.” (NYT)

The pundits had forecast 240,000 new jobs for July, but the Department of Labor (DOL) reports there were barely 32,000. In fact, the DOL revised the May and June figures downward by 61,000. There are a million fewer jobs today than there were in late 2000, when the economy was supposedly emerging from the last

‘The pundits had forecast 240,000 new jobs for July, but the Department of Labor reports there were barely 32,000.’

recession and after nearly three years of economic growth! And according to the new Census report, there were 1.3 million more people in poverty in 2003, mostly women and children.

The soaring cost of — and profits from — healthcare is another brake on job creation. Companies are

“reluctant” to hire new workers and take on added health insurance costs. Paying overtime is less costly than hiring new workers, especially since Bush’s new regulations exempt six million workers from overtime pay! And now the bosses are either forcing workers to pay part or all of their health insurance or just eliminating it all together.

“Since employment peaked,” says Mark Zandi, chief economist at Economy.com, “we’ve lost many more higher-paying jobs than lower-paying jobs. In recovery, we’ve created more lower-paying jobs than higher-paying jobs.” In fact, new jobs are averaging \$9,000 less per year than the ones lost. (NYT, 8/9) And more high paying jobs will be lost.

On September 1, Ford and GM reported plans to cut production of cars and trucks by 165,000 in the last quarter of 2004 from a year ago. According to the Detroit Free Press, Ford’s market share of 19.7 percent is their lowest since the 1930s. Ford will build fewer vehicles in the fourth quarter than it has since the recession of 1991. GM will cut production to its lowest level since the attacks on September 11, 2001.

The laws of capitalism dictate that most of the value produced by workers fills the coffers of the bosses who own the means of production. Communists must turn the fight against the profit system into a struggle to abolish wage slavery with communist revolution. ☸

CHICAGO DEMOCRATS PROTECT POLICE TORTURERS

CHICAGO, IL September 1
— Today former Chicago police Cmdr. Jon Burge took the 5th Amendment scores of times when asked if he or detectives under his command tortured suspects in the Area 2 and Area 3 police stations. Burge even took the 5th when asked the color of his hair or whether he was ever a detective in Area 2, before becoming a commander in Area 3.

Burge and detectives working for him are accused of torturing 108 black and Latin suspects between August 1972 and September 1991, long before anyone here ever heard of Abu Grahb. They are accused of using electric shock, Russian roulette, attempted suffocation with typewriter covers and beatings to extract confessions.

Police torture was city policy, not the work of some “bad apples,” and spanned the administrations of at least five Democratic mayors, including Chicago’s first black mayor, Harold Washington. Democratic Mayor Richard Daley was Cook County state’s attorney (chief prosecutor) from 1980–1989, and prosecuted many of the victims of Burge’s torture chamber. The city fired Burge in 1993 while a federal lawsuit alleging torture by Burge was pending in court. Yet the city continues to spend workers’ tax dollars to pay his civil legal fees and those of the police-torturers who worked under him.

Current Cook County State’s Atty. Richard Devine, another Democrat, worked under Daley when he was state’s attorney.



When he was in private practice, his law firm represented Burge in a civil suit, and he worked on the case. Devine has refused to seek charges against Burge, claiming a three-year statute of limitations.

Two attorneys representing four freed death row inmates and another current inmate said they want Daley and several former police superintendents to be deposed to “...prove a widespread conspiracy, a code of silence.” (Chicago Tribune 9/2)

Racist police terror and torture are the norm under capitalism, and the Democrats are as guilty as the Bush gang. From Attica to Chicago, from Vietnam to Iraq, U.S. bosses have proven over and over again that they are the most ruthless rulers on the planet. Building a mass international PLP is the only sure way to eventually smash their torture chambers, and destroy their system that thrives on them. ☸

Peru: Angry Masses Show Racism is Tarnished Path

Racism is a universal aspect of capitalism. The bosses make super profits from the super exploitation of a group of workers, while at the same time using racism as a political weapon to divide the working class. In Peru, civil rights organizations have begun a campaign against the blatant racism suffered by indigenous, blacks and dark-skinned Peruvians in general. Their plan is to collect a symbolic 10,000 signatures in a petition against racism to be presented to the authorities on December 10, International Human Rights Day.

They say that racism has become a national disease in Peru, and that it has grown in the midst of the indifference of the politicians and rulers.

Jorge Jordán, of the National Human Rights Coordinating Group—a coalition of several human rights groups—said the

This petition is a good beginning but there is a better way to fight racism. Some months ago, thousands of mainly indigenous residents of the city of Ilaive rebelled against the lack of services by the government. The angry masses lynched the crooked local mayor. The government had to send the army to quell the protests. Also, just a couple of months ago, a general strike shut down the main cities protesting against President Toledo’s anti-working class policies. Interesting enough, the Mayor of Ilaive was indigenous, and Toledo is a dark-skinned mestizo.

Workers and youth realize that it is not a matter of the color of the skin of the rulers, but which class they represent. Toledo was brought directly from his job at the World Bank in Washington to rule Peru after the dictator Fujimori fled to

‘Workers and youth realize that it is not a matter of the color of the skin of the rulers, but which class they represent.’

purpose of the campaign is to create consciousness among the people of the never ending problem of racism. He claims that the problem can be seen from job discrimination to lack of dark faces in advertising and discrimination in admission to public places. Thousands of indigenous people were killed (mainly by the army and cops) during the recent guerrilla war waged by the Shining Path group.

Tokyo and his security chief Montesinos, was jailed.

In the final analysis, the racism suffered by the mostly indigenous, mestizo and black population won’t be ended by petitions to the bosses, but by fighting for a communist society, where racism is abolished and anyone committing it is punished. ☸

LETTERS

Politics of 'Selling' Challenge at Anti-Bushites Protests

I had an exciting experience last week participating in activities during the Republican Convention. At the main demonstration on August 29, I distributed Challenge to the enormous crowds. For almost two hours I stood at a key intersection announcing our line to the marchers. "It's not just Bush, It's Capitalism; Elections Won't Solve Our Problems; The Day After the Elections, the Same People Will Be Running Our Society No Matter Who Wins: They're the Capitalists, That's Why It's Called Capitalism. We Need Revolution."

I must have announced these and other lines to over 10,000 marchers during that time. And people were listening. Many would give me knowing looks even as they passed (unfortunately, it wasn't easy for them to stop). And quite a few people actually stopped, turned around, and came back weaving through the crowd to get a paper after hearing what I was saying. They were asking for the paper. I engaged many people in conversation about the election and the necessity to build a mass movement against capitalism. I was impressed once again at how many people do not agree that we need to vote for Kerry, the idea overwhelmingly pushed by the liberal leadership of these marches.

There were obviously many who will vote, but there were many others who felt strongly that voting will not do it, and is a distraction from the real work of building a movement to confront capitalism.

Some people were suspicious that I was simply "selling" something. People are used to people "selling" ideas in the capitalist way, and many see it as opportunist. Indeed, this demonstration brought out all manner of hawkers, selling all kinds of merchandise, much of it creative but with a lousy political line. In contrast, I told people we encourage donations, but the main thing was to read the paper and become involved in the struggle. Many softened their defensiveness (and anti-communism) with this approach, and then gave money anyway! I collected a good amount of money and showed people that it's politics that is primary, not profits.

Our party has to become better at raising money among the working class, and that is a political task. At these mass demonstrations, we want to get our ideas into the hands of as many people as possible. As we raise money to conduct our political activities, I think flexibility and approachability yield far better results than hard-line "selling."

I also participated in several cultural activities. There are great opportunities for our Party to become involved in the cultural-political renaissance taking place in many quarters, particularly among young people, and use this as a method of party recruitment. I read at a poetry reading, where I was able to criticize bourgeois elections and introduce a class analysis of society. My poems exposed how working-class soldiers from both sides of the war suffer for the profits of the bosses, and how workers' indestructible dreams of a better world are the worst nightmares of the ruling class. The poems were hard-hitting and caused a strong reaction among the crowd. Several people came up to me

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afterwards, impressed by our politics.

All in all, it was an inspiring experience to spend the week spreading PLP's ideas of communist revolution among the workers and youth of NYC. I look forward to building on that experience in the months ahead.

NYC RED TEACHER

Fighting for Communist Politics in Pakistan

Congratulation on a successful, impressive and bold Boston summer project. Only PLP is doing great job for a communist revolution. Others are fake, pro-capitalists and nationalists. We believe that only communism will solve the problems of the poor working class. Through communist revolution we can get rid of exploitation, slavery and wars. The profit system is creating wars. In these wars and in the coming World War III, millions of poor people will die. So it is our first and foremost duty to fight against capitalism throughout the world to avert the World War III. Internationalism is the weapon of the working class to fight against capitalist evils. Our party— PLP— is an international Communist organization that strives for equality, justice, liberty and knowledge.

We are trying to make our party strong and capable of mobilizing masses against capitalist oppression, exploitation, layoffs, racism and nationalism. We started our work in 1990 and face many hurdles in organizing our Party. We fight some agents of capitalism within our party. We fight against selfishness and opportunism around us. With criticism and self-criticism, Democratic Centralism and internationalism, we have progressed. First we organized in study groups, then party clubs. Now we have some active members working in different parts of Pakistan.

We are very active in the unions and mass organizations. Our comrades fight for communism among textile, steel and telecommunication workers, among teachers and medical workers, among peasants and students intellectuals, in several cities. The fake leftists are very disappointing. Some have courage to fight against exploitation, so we are trying to give them real leadership.

The so-called elected Premier of Pakistan is a person of imperialism, who will try to strengthen capitalism in this region. Things will only get worse for the working

class as privatization brings low wages, unemployment, no services and no security. Shoukat Aziz is a capitalist economist whose policies will strengthen the capitalist economy on the backs of the working class. He cannot eradicate terrorism, political harassment, torture, exploitation, and wage slavery.

We are doing our best to build the Party. We have to publish some articles in Urdu. Some of our friends published Road to Revolution 4 in Sindhi. Please send us more CHALLENGES, The Communist, and the "Revolt-Don't Vote!" T – Shirt.

Pay our Communist Greetings to all the Comrades

A COMRADE FROM PAKISTAN

CHALLENGE RESPONSES: Thanks for your letter. We will send you more CHALLENGES and T-Shirts and The Communist magazine. Indeed, the building of an international revolutionary communist movement is key to fight a capitalist system on route to endless wars, and eventually World War 3. History has proven that as long as there is capitalism and class society there will be war. Our task is to prepare the world's working class for the long struggle to organize workers, soldiers, youth and peasants to turn the endless wars of capitalism (and eventually another World War) into a mass revolutionary struggle to smash the warmakers and build communism, a society without capitalists-imperialists.

Collective Struggle Helped Us During SEIU Convention

Several party members brought a communist message to thousands of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) members at their International Convention held in San Francisco last June. Bay Area comrades joined with out-of-town delegates, made a plan and carried it through. Without the support of the collective, none of the plan would have happened. Working together, new and experienced comrades all grew in understanding and morale.

When the out of town delegates arrived, we met with the comrades from San Francisco and reviewed the convention schedule. We also did some sightseeing and bonding. The next day, at the big March for National Health Care across the Golden Gate Bridge, a contingent of Party youth

held a banner that stated, "Capitalism never has and never will provide health care to all the workers." Thousands of good and honest people pledged to fight until the health care system is "fixed." But while we fight for decent health care, we don't want to become burned out and frustrated trying to fix a system that can't be fixed. That's why the banner was good and a lot of CHALLENGES were sold.

We also bonded with our delegate group and discussed the resolutions up for a vote. We wanted to make a statement from the convention floor that supporting Kerry was not the answer.

A few of us attended a Labor Against War forum, hosted by an SEIU local. This group, led by revisionists and fake leftists, was sponsoring some anti-war resolutions, focusing on supporting Iraqi workers' right to unionize and voting Bush out. But they shied away from attacking Kerry and the Democrats who support the war. It was interesting to hear various comments of people on the "left," and even more interesting that they refused to let a PLP member speak, going out of their way to ignore his raised hand. After that, we spent a lot of time discussing the political struggle against these fakers, and making a plan to speak from the floor the following day.

The next day, I went to the mike to speak in support of the resolution. I emphasized that the war was about oil profits, and that the unions need to organize workers to use their ultimate weapon, withholding our labor power, instead of supporting politicians. I did not directly attack Kerry, but did raise some key points that several people said they agreed with. It's very intimidating to stand up and disagree with the union leadership and their base at these conventions. I did not say everything the Party wanted me too, but if it weren't for the collective struggle, I probably wouldn't have said anything at all. This was definitely some on-the-job training.

The next day, Kerry came to speak and the Party had a flyer calling him the “slicker” of the two evils, and calling for communist revolution. We had to stand in line for several hours going through the Secret Service checkpoint, and I was able to have three very in-depth conversations with three of my co-workers. I had an additional three more conversations during the trip and I did get literature out to them. I have followed up with one fairly regularly since then.

The comrades from the Bay Area did a great job, fighting to guarantee the Party both inside and outside the convention. Their help and hospitality were invaluable. We also met some other West Coast comrades, and it was a big boost to my confidence.

STRUGGLING DELEGATE

Felt Great in First Activity Against Racist Cross-burning

A 12-foot cross was burned into the lawn of a black Howard County public school official, who was accused of conspiring with another black high school principal to tamper with her daughter's grade. She was suspended, and then reinstated after an appeal to the new school superintendent. At a heated public meeting, a group of whites left feeling the school officials "got over." In response to such racist pres-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

MORE LETTERS

sure, she has now resigned. And yet our movement advanced in this setting.

Howard County, in the suburbs of Washington, DC is rapidly changing from rural farmland to a suburban bedroom of the region, and is becoming racially diverse. A black co-worker and CD reader lives in Columbia, the planned city in Howard County. Her husband was a substitute teacher in Howard County this past year. She was furious about the cross burning, so we agreed to distribute a flyer talking about the need to stop these racists before they grow, emphasizing the need for multi-racial unity and trust in the community. She had never done a leaflet before and was nervous about approaching her neighbors, but she and her husband agreed to pass out the flyers at the shopping center. The flyer pointed out that the KKK uses cross burnings as an organizing tool, something she and her friends had never thought of quite that way.

My neighbor, another Challenge reader, read the flyer and agreed to join us, including the couple's kids, to leaflet in Columbia. We passed out almost 200 leaflets in 1 1/2 hours! Overwhelmingly, the black, Latin, Asian and white shoppers were friendly and appreciated us being there.

My co-worker grew bolder and initiated conversations. She saw some people she knew and talked with them. My neighbor surprised both of us. She gave out the most flyers and was very dynamic in talking about the ideas and trying to reach every person who passed by. My co-worker felt much better after this and made sure to call another co-worker to tell her how well it went.

She said, "I was nervous before we went out to leaflet. I had never done anything like it before. I was surprised at how many people didn't know about the cross burning incident. I'd say 98% of the response was positive. There was really no difference

in the level of interest between blacks, whites, male, female, younger, older. I decided to go out and do it because people have died fighting for rights, justice, equality, etc. I can spend 2 hours trying to help make people more aware about what's going on in their community, since I've derived so many benefits from the those who fought in the Civil Rights movement."

What we do counts! This small action got two new people active, moved a third person to mass activity, and created an awareness among hundreds of working people that multi-racial, anti-racist boldness must become part of their daily lives. Getting CD out regularly laid the foundation for this modest advance.

DC COMRADE

CIA-Trained Terrorists Freed in Panama

Bush and Kerry are calling each other champions of the war against terrorism. Everyone who opposes U.S. imperialism's plans for global domination is a "terrorist." Well, when it comes to terrorism, the U.S. is still number one. Everyone knows that Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda were trained, armed and financed by the CIA and its allies, from the Saudi oil sheiks to the drug-dealing Pakistani army, during the war against the Soviet army in Afghanistan.

On August 26, another famous CIA-trained terrorist made the news. Mireya Moscoso, the rightwing outgoing President of Panama, ordered the release of Luis Posada Carriles, Gaspar Jiménez Escobedo, Guillermo Novo Sampoll and Pedro Remón Rodríguez. Carriles, 76 years old, was a CIA-trained mercenary in the 60s who took part in JFK's failed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. When he was released by Cuba, he got more training to carry out sabotage

against the Cuban government. In 1976 he placed a bomb in a Cubana Airlines flight, killing 73 people, including the entire Cuban fencing team returning from an international tournament. He was jailed in Venezuela but escaped. In 1997 he took part in a series of bombings against hotels in Havana, killing Italian tourist Fabio di Celmo and injuring many others.

He was arrested in Panama along with his three accomplices in Nov. 2000, after he tried to assassinate Fidel Castro by placing a bomb in the University of Panama during a Latin American Presidents summit meeting.

His accomplices are also terrorists who helped bomb embassies and hotels in Cuba. Guillermo Novo Sampoll worked for the DINA, Pinochet's Gestapo, and was involved in the murder of Orlando Letelier, Allende's former Foreign Minister, in Washington, DC. Pedro Ramón Rodríguez was involved in the murder of Cuban diplomat Felix Garcia Rodriguez and another Cuban in NYC on Sept. 11 1980.

As soon as these guys were freed, three of them fled to Florida. Carriles is hiding somewhere in Central America. They are all protected and financed by local death squads and the Cuban-American Foundation, well connected to the Bush administration.

Again, when it comes to terrorism, the

U.S. ruling class and its goons are number one.

A READER

Winning Workers in Oakland Community Organization

"What about Racism, fascism, war and capitalism?" I said. "What about reform and the dismantling of the system," the facilitator replied. "What about Reform and Revolution?" I said. This discussion took place at an all-day retreat of "Education not Incarceration ...a mass-based community group in Oakland, California.

The facilitator of the retreat talked about "moving people to the left." We in PLP talked to several people about joining a discussion group on "Who Rules the US?" We also distributed CHALLENGES.

We have proposed working on an "Anti-Violence Initiative" for the November election, involving PLP members in a mass campaign, helping us bring other workers and youth closer to the ideas of PLP. Figuring out how to relate reform and revolution (i.e. bringing communist politics to this reform struggle) is quite a challenge.

WEST COAST COMRADES

Russian Children continued from page 8

tional speculator George Soros (a friend of Berezovsky and Kissinger), helped Mikhail Saakashvili take power in Georgia after a "peaceful democratic coup" overthrew Shevernadze. Amid the terrorist wave across Russia, Georgia threatened to recapture the province of Abkhazia by force. The Russian Army protects its ruler. U.S. and UK oil companies have plans for a huge Baku-Ceyhan pipeline to transport Caspian oil

through Georgia, by-passing Russian territory. "From the American point of view, Russian failure in Chechnya is welcome, as long as it does not get to the point that Chechnya becomes a base for Islamic revolution worldwide." (www.pinr.com, 9/8 report)

Again, as big and little terrorist capitalists fight for control of the oil profits and re-divide the world, workers, soldiers and their children are being massacred. The only escape from this hell is to build a revolutionary movement to fight for a communist world. That's PLP's goal.☼

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM MAINSTREAM NEWSPAPERS THAT CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION:Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly (UK)

A Kerry vote helps System

Kerry's ability to raise almost as much money as the Republicans is seen as a triumph for American democracy; but his corporate backers are funding him not because they believe in democracy, but because they believe that he will do what they want. And they are unlikely to be wrong. When Kerry gets his orders, he reports for duty.

The idea that this frightened, flinching man would oversee the necessary democratic revolution is preposterous. He has made the system work for him by working for the system. He knows that, as soon as he turns against it, it will destroy him.... A vote for Kerry is not just a vote against George Bush. It is a vote for the survival of the system that made Bush happen. (GW, 9/2)

Army recruiters never mention war

A recruiting brochure arrived at our house from the U.S. Army.... It says nothing about needing to train individuals to kill or be killed in Iraq.... Here's what the Army offers: "The chance to qualify for 150 careers; guaranteed training in your chosen career;...up to \$50,000 for college after you serve...."

Now that's some bait [for]....a young man or woman who can't go to college because it's unaffordable and who can't get a job because the economy is not pro-



ducing enough jobs. There is no mention of patriotism or valor in the brochure. There is no mention of war. Instead, the brochure suggests the Army is training a force of medical specialists, chefs and journalists. (Baltimore Sun, 8/11)

TV helps drag kids down

Studies have found that children who watch 10 or more hours of TV a week have lower reading scores and perform less well academically than comparable youngsters who spend less time watching television.... The more TV watched by toddlers aged 1 to 3, the greater their risk of attention problems at age 7. For each hour watched a day, the risk of developing attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder increased by nearly 10 percent....

transform No Child Left Behind into something closer to Some Children Left Behind, particularly for disabled children and immigrants.... These students...are frequently excluded from accountability systems. (NYT, 8/18)

Exploiting Iraq's economy

Officially, the U.S. occupation of Iraq ended on June 28, 2004. But in reality, the United States is still in charge: Not only do 138,000 troops remain to control the streets, but the "100 Orders" of L. Paul Bremer III remain to control the economy....

They lock in sweeping advantages to American firms, ensuring long-term U.S. economic advantage.

A sampling of the most important orders demonstrates the economic imprint left by the Bush administration: Order No. 39 allows for: (1) privatization of Iraq's 200 state-owned enterprises; (2) 100 percent foreign ownership of Iraqi businesses; (3) "national treatment" — which means no preferences for local over foreign businesses; (4) unrestricted, tax-free remittance of all profits and other funds; and (5) 40-year ownership licenses.

Thus, it forbids Iraqis from receiving preference in the reconstruction while allowing foreign corporations — Halliburton and Bechtel, for example — to buy up Iraqi businesses, do all of the work and send all of their money home. (L.A. Times, 8/10)

Many parents of children diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder found the difficulty markedly improved after they took away television viewing privileges.... [Also,] "TV reduction appears to be the most effective measure in reducing weight gain," said Dr. William H. Dietz of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (NYT, 8/3)

Leaving the child behind

[The] No Child Left Behind....law gives schools dozens of ways to fail, but does little to help them tackle the causes of low achievement among poor, minority and disabled children.... The right to transfer was not real... There aren't enough good schools to go to....

Many states have also found ways to

Diamond Exploiters Enslave 5-year olds

“Diamonds are forever” say the jewelry industry ads. But for the bosses of the diamond business, children are not forever. In the run-down houses of the Idagh neighborhood of Jaipur, India, amid garbage and rats, children as young as five years old toil in darkened rooms up to 12 hours a day polishing diamonds and other precious stones that soon will be sold for small fortunes in the jewelry stores of the world.

Beginning at dawn each day, they must work at least two years as slaves before getting “paid” 12¢ for each finished diamond or ruby. They suffer deformed fingers because of constantly touching the metal of the round wheel, and respiratory problems caused by chemical fumes used to shine the stones. (Reported in Madrid’s “El Mundo,” 8/15.)

Twenty thousand such children, mostly from the lower castes and other minorities, are enslaved in the Indian cities of Surat and Jaipur alone, according to the International Labor Organization, all to cut the cost of producing these stones by 5% to 10%. This is the dirty little secret of the world’s diamond business, but it’s no secret who controls this profit-making operation: the international fine stones bosses — 90% of all diamonds, 95% of emeralds, 85% of rubies and 65% of sapphires are cut and polished in India by these slave children basically working for food.

Much has been said about child soldiers in the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and other African countries used to fight the “diamond wars” waged by local warlords to control the diamonds which are sold to the international diamond bosses. But India’s child slaves are well hidden.

El Mundo reports that Mohamed Sussain and Javea have the two qualities making them candidates to become diamond slaves: little fingers and empty stomachs. Four other children work with them in the small shop, beginning at dawn, melting the stones in little bamboo bars before polishing them and giving them final shape using a manual wheel. “If I work two more years,” says Javea without taking his eyes from the small ruby he’s shaping,

“I will begin to get paid.”

In Idgah, a Moslem neighborhood, almost all the houses have been turned in small clandestine shops. The owners divide the workers into small units of five to ten children to avoid detection. No one knows or says where the stones come from. They are brought in the morning and picked up polished later in the day.

The fine stones originate mostly in Africa, Russia or Australia; are classified into 14,000 categories based on their size, quality and color in labs in Antwerp, New York, Bombay and Tel Aviv; and are then shipped for polishing and shaping by India’s child slaves before ending up in the jewelry stores of the centers of world capitalism. The bosses save enough from using this child labor to make it worth the stones’ long round-trip to India.

Some local pro-children activists have given India’s government detailed locations of these shops, but nothing’s been done. “There is no such thing as child labor here,” a Jaipur Labor Dept. official told El Mundo.

The precious stones business is monopolized by De Beers — the South African mining giant owns 50% of the industry, with yearly sales of \$60 billion — and the Lev Leviev Group, which controls a large part of the polishing and cutting of the stones. De Beers and a few others hold 10 sale meetings a year with wholesale buyers, at non-negotiable prices, kept high by a distribution system limiting supplies. The huge demand expected in the next

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few years from Asia and the Near East will further enrich these bosses.

Because of worldwide pressure, the industry has slightly adjusted their purchases from warlords in Africa, just as a publicity stunt. But for the children of India, nothing has changed. And consumers will still pay high prices. The industry’s bosses are the only ones benefiting from this slave labor. And when prices for precious stones began declining because of the Iraq war and the world capitalist crisis, the bosses in India did their part to save money by hiring many more children and intensifying their exploitation. No matter how horrible capitalism gets, it can always top itself.

A system like this indeed doesn’t deserve to exist. For the love of the world’s children, it’s time to smash it forever. Then, under communism, children will be the only precious ones society will polish and nurture.☺

Caspian Oil Profits Behind Massacre of Workers and Children

Russian workers and their children are paying the price of the implosion of the former Soviet Union caused by its many internal contradictions and the state capitalist policies of Krushchev, Brezhnev and Gorbachev. The latest victims are hundreds of children and teachers massacred in a crossfire in a Beslan school. This followed the mid-air blowing up of two passenger planes and a bomb blast in the Moscow subway, murdering several riders.

Tens of thousands have died in the civil wars in Chechnya, Georgia, North Ossetia, Dagestan and other former Soviet regions in the North Caucasus. Chechnya once had the most important oil and gas pipelines there. Grozny had a huge oil refinery which produced 20 million barrels annually. By 1993 it had declined to three million. The refinery is now destroyed.

By the summer of 1991, former Soviet Air Force General Dudaiev took control of Chechnya, surrounding the local Soviet parliament in Grozny, and literally threw its leader out the window. Dudaiev’s blatant anti-communism combined Chechen nationalism with Islamic fundamentalism to grab the oil and gas profits away from Moscow.

Yeltsin sent the Russian army to crush the secession. After years of war, with tens of thousands dead and Grozny destroyed by the Russian Air Force, the demoralized Russian army lost the war. But the rising Russian bourgeoisie wasn’t about to lose this key region. Dudaiev was killed by a Russian guided missile. He was succeeded by Defense

Minister Mas0khlov, who disillusioned Chechens expecting a change when he did nothing to oppose the growing Islamic fundamentalists, warlords and criminal gangs running the country. (London Financial Times, 9/7)

As soon as Putin replaced the drunken Yeltsin, the war erupted again. Russian generals and the FSB (the ex-KGB) used Russian soldiers as the private army of corrupt generals and officers. These were young workers who couldn’t afford a bribe to avoid military service, along with orphans (to avoid the protest of angry parents). Neo-Nazi mercenaries were hired to become death squads and kill “blacks” (dark-skinned people from the Caucasus). Workers from Chechnya and Russia were paying in blood for what had become a turf war between local warlords and crooked Russian generals.

It’s probably no accident that the latest rash of terrorist attacks occurs while Putin is trying to wrest control of Russia’s oil giants from billionaires whose interests run contrary to those of the overall Russian ruling class. Oil mogul Mikhail Khodorskovsky has been jailed. Another oil billionaire, Boris Berzosky is now exiled in London. Both are suspected of financing Shamil Basayev, head of the Chechen terrorists. (Pravda, 3/6/04). Basayev forces operate from Georgia, where many of his Chechen fighters are in exile. Last year interna-

Learning From Class Struggle and Communist Politics

More than 20 youth participated in a communist school recently in a Latin American country. It was a red dawn, a new hope for the working class, among the youth who will guarantee the continuity and advance of red ideas. We began with an international report and then analyzed the situation in the country, including the effect of the war.

Then the discussion about reform and revolution got very exciting. “We’ve participated in struggles for reforms,” said some students, who days before had marched through the streets demanding a rollback in a bus fare increase. Youth had thrown eggs and rocks at drivers. “Now that I think about

about articles in the paper. But I knew that something like this school was missing, to be able to share experiences with other youth and learn from each other, and it’s made me very happy. Youth here are beginning to fight back. The doubts about the system are becoming clearer. Now communism makes sense to me. I’m here in this meeting because it’s what I want. These cadre schools are necessary so we can build a mass party for communism, the PLP.”

In one group a youth said that living under capitalism is necessary to continue to explain communism. This pushed us as a Party to continue motivating and teaching the youth,

‘Youth here are beginning to fight back. The doubts about the system are becoming clearer. Now communism makes sense to me.’

it,” one said, “with everything we’ve talked about here, the driver is a worker. The guilty ones are the bosses, not the workers. Now I’m clearer on how to take advantage of these struggles to fight for the PLP’s line.”

This was said after some students were beaten, arrested and jailed by the fascist cops. But these attacks only raised their spirits and their openness to communist ideas. After their analysis about this, you could feel their enthusiasm and hope, working and learning to give revolutionary leadership.

Another youth said, “I’ve read and distributed CHALLENGE for about five years and even spoken at the local radio station

to maintain their enthusiasm.

In the evening, we held workshops in which everyone participated. At a plenary session afterwards, everyone evaluated the school and gave very useful suggestions about how to deepen and broaden PLP’s work among youth. “We need to have these schools more frequently. This is where I want to be, learning more, to recruit more youths into PLP.”

The work among youth is bearing fruit. They’re the guarantee we’ll achieve a communist society. Long live the working class! Long live communism!☺

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7